

OREGON AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE - EXTENSION SERVICE

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Nov. 1933

Cooperative Extension Work in Agriculture and Home Economics

Oregon Agricultural College and United States Department of
Agriculture, CooperatingPrinted and distributed in furtherance of the Acts of Congress of
May 8 and June 30, 1914

HOUSE ANTS

by

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There are a number of small red and black ants that frequently gain access to the house and cause no little annoyance to the careful housewife by their depredations in the pantry and kitchen. Recent investigations have disclosed one or two practices which almost without exception will give practically immediate results and clear out even an unusually serious visitation of this pest.

Carbon Bisulphide

Where it is possible to locate the ant colony from which the visitations are coming outside the house, the most simple method of procedure is to obtain a small amount of carbon bisulphide from your druggist and pour about 2 tablespoonfuls of this liquid directly into the entrance to the colony. The earth should then be firmly pressed down over the entrance to hold the fumes inside. This material is a liquid which on exposure to air transforms to a gas, but is heavier than air and, therefore, permeates downward through the passages of the colony and kills out all of the ants that are present. Carbon bisulphide is an inflammable material and caution in lighting fires should be observed in its use. Do not open near a hot stove or indulge in smoking while using it.

Tartar Emetic

Where it is not possible to locate the colony outside of the house, the most satisfactory treatment thus far found is the use of tartar emetic at the rate of three grains of the tartar emetic to about 4 tablespoonfuls of cheap syrup. Mix this material thoroughly and smear on bits of wood or china and place about on shelves and the runways where the ants frequent. It is very easy to get this material too strong, therefore it is advisable to have the druggist weigh up the material in 3-grain samples rather than larger amounts. Tartar emetic is a slow acting poison which will not kill the ants instantly, but permits them to collect the material, carry it to their colony and feed their brood upon it and thus the entire colony is killed out in a few days. This material is so slightly poisonous as to not be dangerous to use in this amount about the shelves and food supplies.

Sodium Flouride

Sodium flouride is a crystalline-like powder which is a great repellent for ants. Many people report excellent results following the dusting or shaking of this material about shelves and places frequented by the ants. Place the material in a salt shaker or similar receptacle and dust it here and there. This is likewise good for cockroaches and other similar pests that occasionally annoy the housewife. Care should be exercised in the use of sodium flouride as it is poisonous to humans if taken internally.